Embryonic stem cells repair nerve damage from mutiple sclerosis in mice

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Researchers at the University of California, Irvine have found that neurons derived from embryonic stem cells were able to repair some damage in a mouse model of multiple sclerosis. In people with MS, the immune system attacks the insulation â called myelin â that covers and protects neurons of the brain and spinal cord. The transplanted cells caused a response in the animals that allowed the myelin coating to be repaired on damaged cells. In humans, repairing the myelin would likely also repair the function of those nerves, bringing back feeling and motor control in people with MS. At this time there are no therapies to repair this damage. Instead, available drugs simply slow the progression of the disease. In this early study, the transplanted neurons survived only two weeks. The authors say more work is needed to understand how the remyelination occurred and how to retain the transplanted cells.

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